

Evil Legislation.

We yesterday briefly referred to a great evil in Virginia—one from which the State has suffered immeasurably—to such a degree, indeed, that it will take years to efface its bad effects. In a great degree this evil is traceable to the unwise policy of the tide-water counties of Virginia upon the subject of internal improvements. That part of the State took a firm stand against all improvements, and compelled the internal-improvement party to resort to very questionable schemes to combine enough strength to carry their measures through the Legislature. This was painful to the wisest and most patriotic men on the internal-improvement side. Had the tide-water counties wisely maintained the balance of power by assisting projects that were really for the good of the State, and securing the defeat of those that were visionary or promised to do more injury than good to the State, they would have secured to Virginia the greatest advantages, and at the same time would have kept the public debt within reasonable bounds, whereas the State has reaped untold evils, among them even dismemberment.

It is lamentable—it is grievous to the State and all her people—that the tide-water did not hold this balance of power and join with the sensible and truly public-spirited leaders in framing a wise system of public improvements, and giving to that system the liberal aid of the State. Such a system could have been established with much less money than was expended, and such a system would have prospered, and would have established and maintained the integrity of the domestic commerce of the State, while in no sense would it have impaired the interstate and foreign commerce interesting to Virginia.

Such a system would have had for its base-line a trunk road from the West to the Virginia tide at Richmond; and the lateral lines leading to this trunk would have connected with the capital the principal divisions of the different sections of the State. The principal line should have been brought to Richmond because it showed more commercial thrift than any other city, and therefore a greater capacity to digest the general commerce to the advantage of the State. Commerce in passing through that city would have left a larger proportionate amount of sediment to enrich the State than it would in passing through any other, and to that city every wise and honest statesman should have desired first to see it taken. It is the increase of the value of products by the manipulations of the manufacturer that causes the greatest gains from commerce. The mere process of forwarding can never make a great city. A few commission merchants, draymen, and stevedores can do a world of shipping.

Virginia has but two ports from which a great deal of shipping may be done—Norfolk and Richmond. We do not count Alexandria in the ring. A trunk line that leaves out Norfolk would also be a trunk line to Norfolk; while one to Norfolk that leaves out Richmond must be hurtful to Richmond, and could not bestow upon Virginia any advantages to repair the loss inflicted upon her by omitting Richmond. *Prima facie* such a line could be conceived only in a spirit of hostility to Richmond, and such a hostility could only exist in the breasts of sectional partisans who might control the line of improvement. No capitalist who proposed to invest his money in a road would dream of leaving out Richmond, from which he would know the chief prosperity of his enterprise in Virginia would come. The very towns should have risen against this fault in the Virginia improvements. The first city in the State is the most able competitor with outside cities, and other Virginia cities should have sought her help, or rather should have given her theirs, in the great struggle for promoting the volume and success of Virginia commerce. But we shall see that a wise and homogeneous system was rendered impossible. The internal-improvement party, opposed solidly by the tide-water, was compelled to buy votes by "scattering" instead of concentrating the power of Virginia. A "sop" was given to every section. A system of *diffusion* of votes, attended by a wasteful expenditure, unused, and this exhausted the State. But the effects live and promote exhaustion, when so much means restoration and strength.

The balance of power, which should have been wisely held and exerted by the tide-water counties, was badly employed to defeat all improvement. The internal-improvement party was forced to the injurious and very demoralizing system of "log-rolling." Votes were scarce, and every one that could be controlled was needed. Members soon discovered how valuable the vote was, and every one sought to secure with his vote some county improvement, or the twisting of some railroad out of all reason from its true line of utility to run by some out-of-the-way village. Thus the so-called system became no system at all. Votes were bought with railroads or turnpikes, and the routes for railroads were controlled by men who had no practical knowledge about roads, and no other motive than that of advancing their personal popularity and interests.

So the stratagem upon the internal-improvement party by the narrow public mind of the tide-water region begot the vicious system of log-rolling which again inflated the views of sections, and neighborhoods, and villages, and set them pulling at the treasury and skirmishing for schemes that finally drained it to the bottom—schemes that were suggested by selfishness, shaped by ignorant partisans to advance personal views, and tended to weaken the State and scatter her energies and resources after exhausting her treasury. Having first impoverished herself, they fastened upon her works that could never return to her the interest upon her expenditure, and she has nearly purged herself of her property in the public works, as the best thing she could do to save. She has still her property in the James River and Kanawha canal; but that is the object of cupidity, for the "load" has evidently "a jewel in his hand" that excites the desire of some people, and if the present Legislature is not careful the first thing we shall know will be that this property, too, will have gotten beyond the State's control.

The improvement system was badly inaugurated and has been corruptly prosecuted. It has been directed by politicians, and is, therefore, not practical. It tends to weaken Virginia. It does not concentrate and foster her strength. Nevertheless, it gives offices and emoluments to men who have since the war done more to control legislation in Virginia than has the voice of the people of Virginia themselves. Sad, indeed, is the condition of the State, weighed

down by debt incurred for public works that are fearfully faulty, and which afford the very means that are steadily employed to vex her councils and impair her strength. Good and noble of heart as she is, it is a dreadful fate that dooms her, like Milroy's "Sis," to be devoured, as it were, by her own offspring.

Sanctus for Goose and Gander.

We have heard it objected by some of the advocates of the "tail-piece" that the canal-bill contains a clause that no railroad shall be chartered along that route for twenty years. We have not seen the proviso, but we know that the railroad bill contained just such an one; and we do not therefore see how its advocates can object. The State owns the canal and controls it. How can she be asked to set up a rival which she cannot control; that which will seek to control her, and to break down her improvement?

Let us understand you, gentlemen. It is to be presumed that when Major Carrington said the railroad tail-piece would cause the canal to "die," he knew what he was talking about; and when he subsequently adopted the railroad bill he determined, as far as he could, to kill the canal and substitute a railroad.

But if you get the right of way for your railway piece, where will you get the money? You have had that right of way for a year, and you estimate its cost, very moderately indeed, at \$400,000. How much of that amount have you got subscribed in available cash? Then what do you want with another charter? No; it is only a mode of attack upon the canal, and the purpose is to dry that up. Shall they do it? Can they do it?

"Wait," said a gentleman a few days ago, "wait until we get the railroad down to Buchanan, and then it will take only \$400,000 to give us a railroad on the 'tow-path' to Richmond, and we will have 'one of the finest improvements in the world.' But if they cannot get \$400,000 for the tail-piece, how can they get \$400,000—ten times as much—for the entire canal?"

Such views may fill the dreams of wild enthusiasts; and may be argued as advantageous and practicable by men who can combine their bonds and buy the dock and the water-power of the canal. But where is the money to come from? Nowhere, unless from outside the State, subscribed by men alien to Virginia's interests, and caring not if they despoil her, so they make money by the operation.

We want no line of railroad to help the war on the canal.

But "we!" Who are "we?" Ah! Thereby hangs a tale; and thereby hangs the tail-piece.

No wonder that the carpet-baggers and their friends and GRANT and his friends make war on CARL SCHURZ. What was CARL saying as late as 1874? Only that "At the head of the negroes are the great thieves that rule the South and ruin the country for support. The support is given to them freely, and every possible means has been taken to make them blind instruments of the powers that be. The Republican party is responsible for the present condition of the South. I will not be a Republican to deliver the southern people over to the worst set of scoundrels that ever obtained political power. We are fighting for the overthrow of a system—a system of unconstitutional arrogation of power, a system of contempt of law, a system of government by force, a system of plundering in the South and corruption in the North; such a party, when it has come to that, does not deserve to live."

BLAINE's speech in the Senate, as it appears in the *Chicago Times*, reads as follows:

"I am here to do battle," cried the "wah" chief of the Kennebecs, "with any one who espouses that policy of Hayes. 'I lay that gage down for any senator who chooses to pick it up. I give due notice and fair warning that I, Jim Blaine of Maine, am for 'wah.' Is office so dear, are spoils so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of supporting this man Hayes and his peace policy? Forbid it, the president and directors of the Little Rock Railroad Company! I know not what the wah-chief of the Kennebecs, give me the scalp of Hayes or give me some more Little Rock Railroad bonds!"

Our bachelor friend SMITH, of Nelson, has succeeded in inducing the Senate to pass his bill for transferring all the property in Virginia to the hands of the women. It will hardly pass the House without Colonel EUBANK's amendment, which provides that men shall not go in debt without a written permit from their wives. It would be well to add, too, an amendment providing that every man shall will all of his property to his wife which he shall not have transferred to her during his life to keep from paying his debts. Our distinguished friend should be regarded the most eminent paragraphist in the country. His zealous speech in yesterday's *Whig* had more paragraphs in it than any speech of the same length since the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

The President of the United States is blessed with more cousins than any other citizen of the Union. The general effort is to cozen him. We suspect that he has got GRANT on the Supreme Court upon "Cousins."

The "conciliatory policy" is still on rising ground. It grows more and more serious daily to the "imported partisans." The President perseveres in his observations upon the weather. He has thrown "Old Probs" altogether into the shade.

New Hampshire will elect to-day a Governor, a Railroad Commissioner, Councilors, State Senators, and other less important officers, and last, but most important, will be three representatives in Congress.

It is now said that our friend YANKEE ALAN has seriously expressed the opinion that Mr. HAYES is not the man he took him for.

The vote on confirming Mr. KRY was 54 to 23; SCHURZ, 44 to 20; McCABE, THOMPSON, and DEVENS, the vote was not divided.

THE PLANTER and FARMER for the present month has been out for some days, but we have omitted a notice that is due to it until now. A glance at the table of contents of this No. will show at once its solid and utilitarian character. Its opening article is upon "The Improvement of Worn-Out Lands"—a subject of the deepest interest to Virginia at this time; and this seems to indicate the tone of the paper. How to improve Land—Planting and Topping Tobacco—Don't Kill the Birds—Ditching—Tax on Dogs—Spreading Manure, &c., invite the farmer's perusal. Then follow the editorial departments of "Stock," and of "Farm, Garden, and Fruits," which latter, we see, is conducted by Dr. THOMAS POLZARD. The Doctor is a very observant gentleman, who takes a deep interest in the matters entrusted to him. He has been for some time a contributor to the *Planter*, but

his name has not been made known until the last No. The *Planter* is strongly reformed by him. Dr. ELZEY more than keeps up the interest of his department. He gives us a sketch of Dr. MURRAY's farm (Cedar Park), on West River, Maryland. Dr. ELZEY styles it a "grass farm on tide-water," and this a description he gives of it as will inspire in the land something like envy of the fortunate owner. The Doctor's article on "The American Trotting-Horse," and much information about thoroughbred stock, will interest farmers and stock-raisers.

A letter in the *Planter* from a country lady discusses the subject of "Girls as Farmers" in a very intelligent and practical way. In our opinion at all times in Virginia the ladies should have made agriculture a part of polite learning, but now especially has the subject become important to all country ladies. The chances of life bring her forward as liable to exigencies which in former times seldom involved her. The study of nature in the forms of development, at all times refining and agreeable, and at times essential as a way to protect and success in conditions which more than heretofore involve the ladies. So with the intelligent correspondent of the *Planter* we concur most earnestly that women should be "taught to understand agricultural pursuits when young." Such knowledge would inspire a love in woman's heart for country life, and cause many who are destined to that life to love it, for the want of such knowledge, lead lives that are irksome to them.

"In passing" we notice a kind paragraph in the *Planter* about a dinner to the Hermit Club, at which this writer played the host. We are much obliged to the editor, but regret that he seemed more intent upon his "P's" than his "A's." The gentleman to whom he was overly kind is named JAMES A., not JAMES P. Kind parents named him after ST. ANDREW—a long time after; and it might be beneficial not to mistake his name, but rather remind him that he was expected to emulate so good a man. Youth is so liable to go astray.

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There are now seventy-four members of the Senate, and four vacancies to be filled—two from Louisiana, one from Ohio, and one from South Carolina.

THE LOUISIANA CASE is first in order, and it is said the Democrats will vote in favor of postponing the case of Kellogg until next session. The Senate is now composed of thirty-eight Republicans, thirty-three Democrats, and one Independent Republican (Judge Davis). The Democrats have all their senators present, but on the Republican side, Messrs. Edmunds, Sherman, and Wilson are confined to their rooms by sickness, and Mr. Ferry has been called home to Michigan by the serious illness of his brother. Consequently, it but two Republicans vote with the Democrats in favor of postponing the case, that motion will prevail. In the Pinchback case Messrs. Christiancy, Edmunds, Morrill of Vermont, and Paddock, who are now members of the Senate, voted with the Democrats against his admission, and Messrs. Booth and Daves, who would also have voted against his admission, were paired with Messrs. Oglesby and Wright.

On the 12th inst., the President was visited by Senator Gordon, of Georgia, and Representative Gibson, of Louisiana. These gentlemen were also accompanied by Senator Lamar, of Mississippi, and had interviews with the members of the Cabinet to-day upon the same business. The President had a long interview with President Hayes, that being with regard to the question of a continuance of the present status in the States of South Carolina and Louisiana, and was in response to numerous appeals asking for a performance of the service that engaged his attention. The President urged the withdrawal of the troops from the State-Houses in New Orleans and Columbia, and sought to know the disposition of the President in that matter. The interview to-night was perfectly free, and was dealt with on both sides with entire candor. As to the length of time that will elapse before a final result is reached on this matter, Senator Gordon, who had a very cordial expression of views from the President, declines at present to express any opinion further than to say that he is satisfied no unnecessary delay will be had, and that not more than a few weeks will intervene before a final solution will appear.

The President received these gentlemen in the most cordial manner, and was not backward in giving utterance to his opinions as to what was necessary for the purpose of securing peace and prosperity in the southern States generally, and particularly in the sections in whose interests he was approached.—*Baltimore American*.

EXPENDS OF THE OFFICE-SEEKERS.—At the beginning of last week Washington was filled with office-seekers, and the hotels were pressed to find accommodations for the army who were anxious to serve their country in most any capacity their services might be called into requisition. The present week in this respect is very tame. The hotels are empty, and those desiring to serve the State have returned to their homes, waiting for the bugle to sound which will call them into official life.

THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY.—The friends of President Hayes say that he will fill the vacancy on the Supreme bench this week, and that Judge Drummond, of the United States Circuit Court of Illinois, will get the place. Judge J. of Louisiana, is also prominently mentioned for the vacancy. He was formerly Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Louisiana.

GRANT AND SCHURZ.—Ex-President Grant made a short call on President Hayes to-day, at which he took occasion to emphasize the fact that he was antagonizing, in any shape or form, the confirmation of Carl Schurz, which had been unjustly imputed to him.

THE RICHMOND POST-OFFICE.—Mrs. Van-Lew, the postmistress at Richmond, is here, and has been on the behalf of her retention. There are a number of applicants for her place.—*Washington Special*—*Baltimore American*.

MINOR OFFICES.—President Hayes told an office-seeker on Saturday that he would not consider the appointment of any subordinate officer for at least sixty days.

Yesterday the President ordered the appointment of R. A. Young to be postmaster at Petersburg, Va.

The Richmond *Whig* says that "the South don't care for parties." Perhaps not; but how about quadron balls?—*St. Louis Globe*.

The contest for senator from Ohio is gradually narrowing. General Garfield has sent a telegram to Columbia withdrawing his name from the contest, which leaves Mr. Matthews' chances for election as materially strengthened.

Mr. CLAY, by leave, introduced a bill to amend the act in relation to a bridge at South Boston.

SENATE BILLS PASSED.—To incorporate the Jennings Association of the United States, with amendments. To amend the act in relation to